



# CORNELL READING COURSES

COURSE FOR THE FARM HOME

PUBLISHED BY THE NEW YORK STATE COLLEGE  
OF AGRICULTURE AT CORNELL UNIVERSITY

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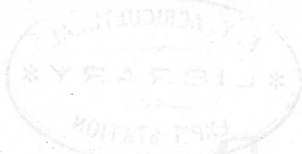
## DANDELIONS AS FOOD

LUCILE BREWER AND HELEN CANON



MAKING SALAD OF CANNED DANDELIONS

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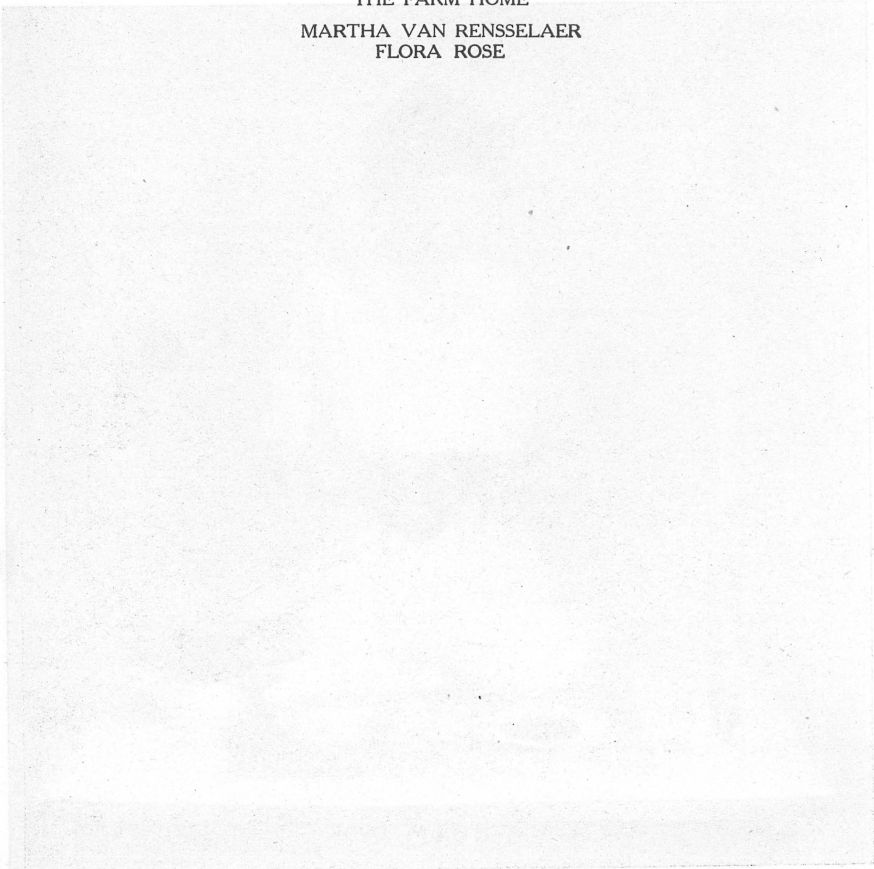
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BEVERLY T. GALLOWAY, DEAN OF THE COLLEGE

SUPERVISORS, COURSE FOR  
THE FARM HOME

MARTHA VAN RENSSELAER  
FLORA ROSE

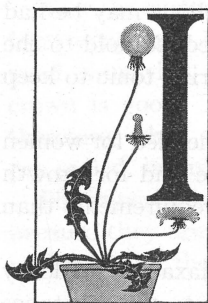


## DANDELIONS AS FOOD

LUCILE BREWER AND HELEN CANON

How like a prodigal doth Nature seem,  
When thou, for all thy gold, so common art!

James Russell Lowell



N a lawn dandelions are out of place, just as spinach or rhubarb would be. Their affinity for lawns has caused them to fall into ill repute; they have truly been a "lion's tooth" in the flesh of the gardener.

Children who are paid by their parents to cut out the pests may add to their incomes by selling the tops for food; but in general the best plants are found in fields or along ditches. In Europe generally and in this country to a limited extent near certain large cities, dandelions are raised as a truck crop.

To many persons their peculiar flavor is very pleasing, and as cooked greens or salad they are considered a great delicacy.

### WHY DANDELIONS ARE A GOOD FOOD

The subject of balanced meals is receiving considerable attention at present. Too often, however, the impression is received that a balanced meal is one that includes protein, fat, and carbohydrate in right proportion. This is true as far as it goes, but experiments, as well as experience, show that there are other requirements for a balanced ration. For example, the body needs certain foodstuffs that both furnish it with building material and help to regulate its processes; in other words, the body must be supplied with ash constituents, or mineral matter.

It has long been known that iron is necessary to maintain the body in a state of health and that it is furnished in such foods as eggs, legumes, cereals, fruits, vegetables, and meats. As sources of iron, it is said that the green vegetables are perhaps the most important of all foods. It is commonly known that spinach contains a relatively large proportion of iron, but it is not generally recognized that dandelions are also of value in this respect. Like other green vegetables, dandelion greens cannot be counted on to furnish the necessary amounts of fuel and building material. But it has been pointed out that this is an advantage, because they may be added to the more staple and usual foods as a supplement instead of being substituted for them.

It is customary in the spring, when both physical and mental vitality is low, to take an iron tonic. In cases where this is necessary, it should be remembered that the iron in foods is used to much better advantage than is medicinal iron. Furthermore, when medicinal iron is prescribed, its effect is increased by the presence of an abundance of food iron.

In proportion to the cost, fruits and vegetables have been found to furnish much more iron than do meats and fish, and the iron of fruits and vegetables is more completely available for nutrition than is the iron of meats. Therefore, since tonics are expensive and dandelions may be had for the cutting, it would seem to be poor economy, indeed, to hold to the tradition in many households of giving the children a spring tonic to keep their blood in good condition.

The liberal use of fruits and vegetables is to be recommended for women and children especially, because for proper maintenance and for growth they require more food iron in proportion to their food requirements than do men.

Dandelions, like other green vegetables, have a mild laxative tendency due largely to their roughage, which is the term applied to the substance that is not affected by the digestive juices. These bulky foods are desirable in any good diet as aids in preventing putrefaction in the lower part of the intestinal tract. It has been shown that anæmia is closely connected with excessive intestinal putrefaction; consequently, foods that tend to prevent putrefaction in this locality play an important part in keeping the blood in good condition.

Aside from the nutritive value already mentioned, dandelion greens are a good addition to the diet for the sake of variety and because of their flavor, which is pleasing to many persons.

### WHEN TO GATHER DANDELIONS

The dandelion has a long, stout taproot that may extend twenty inches or more into the ground. For this reason it is an exceedingly hardy plant; drought does not affect it.

A certain organism that is generally present in the plant goes into a resting stage if there is a lack of moisture, and in this stage it is especially resistant to any agency that might destroy its life. This same organism causes the greens to spoil when they are canned, unless it is killed by the heat during the canning process. From this brief explanation, it may be seen that in a moist season, canned dandelion greens are less likely to spoil than in a dry season. For the same reason, dandelions gathered after a rain or early in the morning while they are still damp with dew, are best for canning. The earlier in the season that dandelions are canned, the



less likely it is that this troublesome organism has put on its defensive armor against drought and, of greater importance to the housekeeper, against heat.

The young leaves are always more tender than the old ones, and they keep their color better.

Every reason seems to point, therefore, to the advisability of gathering dandelions, especially for canning, in the early part of the season.

### HOW TO GATHER DANDELIONS

Near the surface of the ground, the dandelion root is topped by a crown from which the leaves radiate. The flavor of this crown is exceedingly good, somewhat resembling asparagus. Even if the leaves are old, the crown is good. When the leaves are pulled, the crown is left behind; therefore, when dandelion greens are gathered they should always be cut, not pulled, in order that the crown may be obtained.

The imperfect outside leaves should be discarded at the time of gathering, because they are generally tougher than the others, and there can be no uniformity in the cooking if they are allowed to remain in the lot.

### PREPARATION FOR COOKING

Dandelion greens are as difficult to clean as other greens. They should be plunged into a deep pan or bucket full of cold water and should be rubbed thoroughly between the hands. If the leaves are to be used fresh and uncut as a salad, care should be taken to prevent breaking them. They should be lifted from the first water and washed in clean water in the same manner at least three more times. They should then be drained and wrapped in a damp cloth, if they are not to be used immediately.

### COOKING

On account of their bitter flavor, it is generally best to blanch dandelions, whether they are to be canned or only cooked. An easy way of doing this is to tie the leaves in a large piece of cheesecloth, plunge them into boiling water, and let them boil for five minutes. They should then be removed, plunged into cold water, and drained.

If they are to be cooked for immediate use, they should be cut or chopped, placed in a kettle, covered with boiling water, and allowed to cook until they are tender, generally from fifteen to twenty minutes.

### CANNING

For canning, dandelion greens should be washed and blanched as just described. It is ordinarily better to cut or chop the greens before canning

them, because they are then ready for use when removed from the jars. A slice or two of bacon may be added to each jar for flavor. The greens should be packed solidly into the jars, one-half teaspoonful of salt added to each pint jar, and the jar filled with boiling water. Rubbers of a good quality should be used. The rubbers and the lids should be placed on the jars and the wire clamp adjusted but not snapped into place.

The jars should then be placed on a rack in the canner, which may be a boiler or a pressure canner. The boiler, which may be a wash boiler, a dishpan, a sap pail, or any such utensil available in the home, should be fitted with a false bottom to keep the jars from breaking. The pressure canner is less common because it is more expensive than the ordinary canning apparatus, but it saves time, labor, and heat.

Sufficient hot water should be poured around the jars to reach to the shoulders. The water should not be hot enough to break the jars, but the hotter it is, the less time is required to bring it to the boiling point. The boiler should be covered, the water brought to the boiling point, and the jars boiled for one hour after the water begins to boil.

The clamps should then be fastened down, and the jars should be removed from the boiler, inverted on a cloth, and covered in order to prevent the cracking of the glass by drafts.

The next day the clamps should be loosened, and the jars should be returned to the boiler as before directed and boiled for one hour, the clamps being fastened down, as before, at the end of the hour. The same directions given for the first day should be followed for removing and cooling the jars.

On the third day the process of the second day should be repeated.

The sealing of the jars may be tested after several days by loosening the clamp and lifting the jar by the edge of the glass cover. If the seal is perfect, the cover will not come off. The jars should be stored in a cool, dark place in order that the greens may not fade.

The greens may be boiled for an hour and a half on one day only, but the three-days method insures the keeping of the product and for this reason is generally worth the extra time and trouble it requires. The long period for one day only, causes the greens to fade more than does the three-days method, and the flavor is thought by some persons not to be so good. The alternate heating and cooling required by the three-days method is more favorable to the destruction of the organism that causes spoiling than is the one long period of heat. If a five-pound pressure canner is used, one period of one hour is generally sufficient to kill the destructive organism.

For a more detailed discussion of canning, the reader is referred to *Canning Clubs in New York State.—Parts II and III*, the Cornell Reading Course for the Farm Home.

## RECIPES

## DANDELION SOUP

- |                         |                         |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 cupful dandelion pulp | 1 cupful milk           |
| 1 tablespoonful butter  | Salt and pepper         |
| 1 tablespoonful flour   | Yolk of hard-cooked egg |

Make a white sauce, and add to it the dandelion pulp. Just before serving the soup add the yolk of egg, which has been pressed through a sieve.

## DANDELION TIMBALES

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 2 eggs, beaten                 | $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoonful pepper         |
| $1\frac{1}{4}$ cupfuls milk    | 1 teaspoonful onion juice                |
| 2 tablespoonfuls melted butter | 1 cupful chopped cooked dandelion greens |
| $\frac{2}{3}$ teaspoonful salt |  |

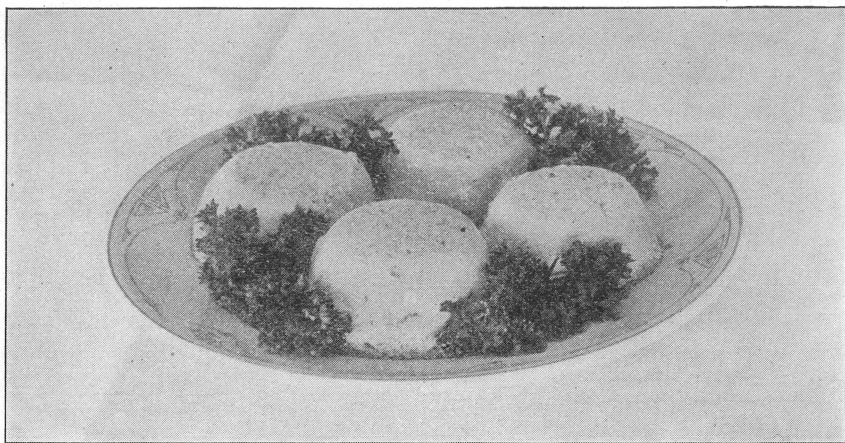


FIG. 14. DANDELION TIMBALES

Mix the ingredients in the order given. Turn the mixture into buttered molds, place the molds in a pan of hot water, and bake the timbales in a moderate oven until they are firm. Remove them from the molds, and serve them with tomato sauce.

## TOMATO SAUCE

- |                            |                           |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 tablespoonful butter     | 1 teaspoonful onion juice |
| 1 tablespoonful flour      | Salt and pepper           |
| 1 cupful strained tomatoes |                           |

Melt the butter, add the flour, and stir the mixture until it is smooth. Add the liquid and the seasoning, and cook the mixture until it is smooth and thick, stirring it all the time. Serve it at once.

**DANDELIONS AND TOMATO SAUCE**

2 tablespoonfuls butter	Cooked dandelions
2 tablespoonfuls flour	Salt and pepper
$\frac{1}{2}$ cupful strained tomatoes	

Make a tomato sauce of the first three ingredients. Add the greens, and mix them well with the sauce. Add the seasoning. Turn the mixture in the shape of a mound on to a plate, and garnish it with hard-cooked eggs or thin slices of tomato.

**DANDELION AND HORSE-RADISH GREENS**

Cook one part of young, tender horse-radish leaves with three parts of dandelion leaves until they are tender. Drain off the water. Cut the leaves, and season them with salt, pepper, and butter. Serve them with a border of stuffed baked potato.

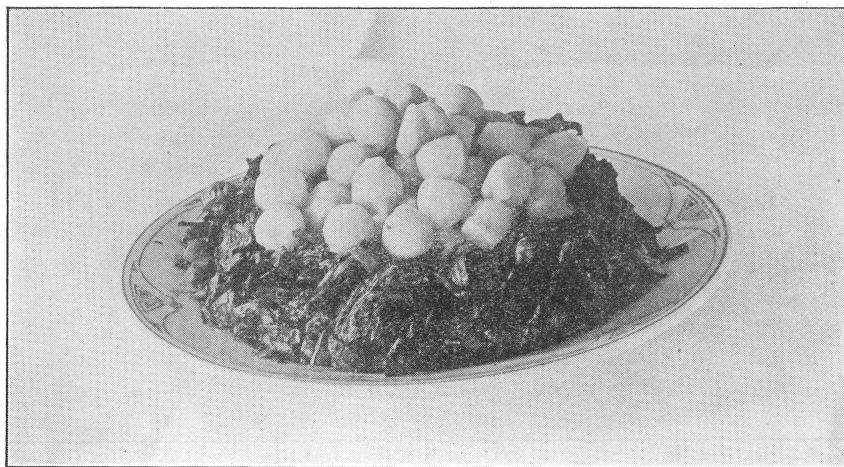


FIG. 15. DANDELION GREENS AND POTATO BALLS

**STUFFED BAKED POTATO**

Bake potatoes of uniform size. Cut them in halves crosswise. Remove the pulp, mash it, and season it with salt, paprika, and hot milk or cream. Heap the mixture in the potato shells, leaving the tops rough. Brush the tops with melted butter, and brown them in the oven.

**DANDELION GREENS AND POTATO BALLS**

Cook potato balls in just enough boiling salted water to cover them. Season them with butter. Arrange the potato balls in a nest of greens that have been chopped and seasoned with salt, pepper, and butter, and shake paprika over the top. Garnish the dish with egg rings.

**DANDELION GREENS WITH BACON**

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 2 tablespoonfuls butter          | 1 tablespoonful onion juice            |
| 1 cupful bread crumbs            | 1 tablespoonful vinegar or lemon juice |
| 1 pint cooked and chopped greens | Salt and pepper                        |

Brown the crumbs slightly in the melted butter, add the greens and the remaining ingredients. When the mixture is hot, form it into a loaf on a plate, garnish it with slices of hard-cooked egg, and place slices of broiled bacon over the top.

**DANDELIONS WITH RICE BORDER**

Season one pint of boiled rice with salt, butter, and paprika. Add one well-beaten egg, and fill small buttered molds with the mixture. Set the molds in a pan of hot water, cover them with oiled paper, and bake the rice

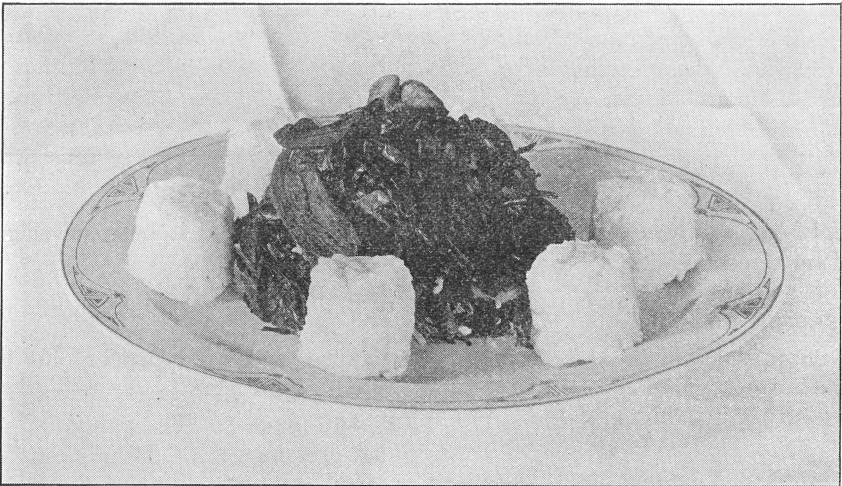


FIG. 16. DANDELION GREENS WITH RICE BORDER

until it is firm. Form a mound of chopped cooked greens, well seasoned with salt, pepper, and butter. Arrange the rice molds as a border, and sprinkle them with grated cheese.

**WILTED DANDELIONS**

Prepare tender leaves and stems of the dandelion, and arrange them on a plate. Add very thin slices of onion. Cut slices of bacon in small pieces, and broil them until they are crisp. Add boiled salad dressing to the bacon, and when the mixture is hot and smooth, pour it over the dandelions and onion. Serve the dish immediately.



**DANDELION SANDWICH FILLING**

Mince fresh dandelion leaves and stems very fine, and add onion juice, celery salt, salt, and pepper for seasoning. Add sufficient salad dressing to

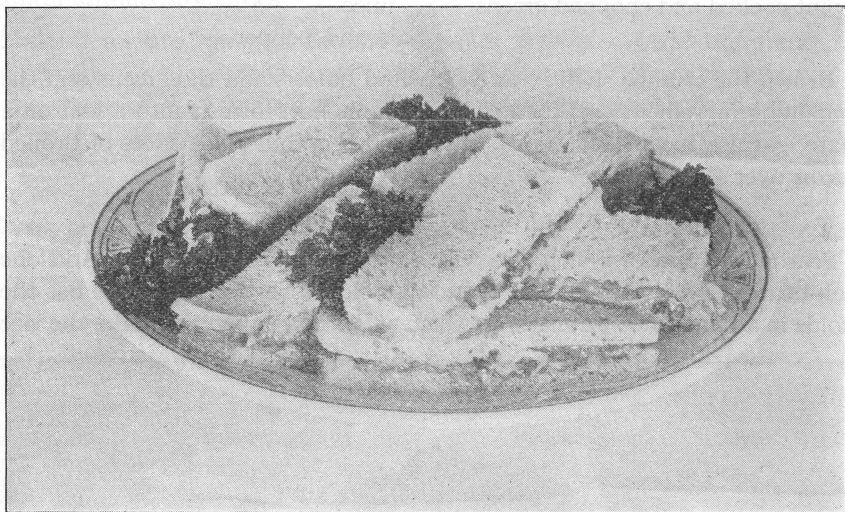


FIG. 17. SANDWICHES WITH DANDELION FILLING

make the mixture of the right consistency, and spread it between slices of buttered bread.

**DANDELION SALAD****RECIPE I**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 2 cupfuls chopped cooked dandelion greens | 1 canned sweet red pepper, cut in small pieces |
| 2 radishes, sliced thin                   | Salt and pepper                                |
|   | Salad dressing                                 |

Mix the ingredients, and serve the salad on lettuce or fresh dandelion leaves.

**RECIPE II**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 2 cupfuls cooked dandelions, chopped fine | 4 small sweet pickles                      |
| 1 onion, medium sized                     | $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon, juice and grated rind |
| 1 canned sweet red pepper                 | Salt and pepper                            |

Mix the ingredients well, and press the mixture firmly into small molds. Turn it from the molds on to lettuce or fresh dandelion leaves. Garnish the salad with thin slices of lemon flecked with paprika, and serve it with boiled or French dressing.

**DANDELION AND COTTAGE CHEESE SALAD**

To one pint of minced dandelion leaves add enough well-seasoned cottage cheese to bind the mixture together. Shape the mixture into small balls, and serve it on dandelion leaves that have been covered with oil and vinegar for at least half an hour. Serve the salad with boiled dressing.

**DANDELION AND CUCUMBER SALAD**

Prepare the tender young leaves of the dandelion, and add one cucumber, pared, chilled, and cut into one-half-inch cubes. Serve the salad with oil dressing.

**EGG AND DANDELION SALAD**

Cut hard-cooked eggs in halves lengthwise, and remove the yolks. Cut tender dandelion leaves into small pieces, add one small onion, minced, and the yolks of the eggs. Mix the ingredients well with boiled salad dressing, and fill the whites of the eggs with the mixture. Serve the eggs around a mound of lettuce or dandelion leaves, or arrange them in a nest of the leaves.

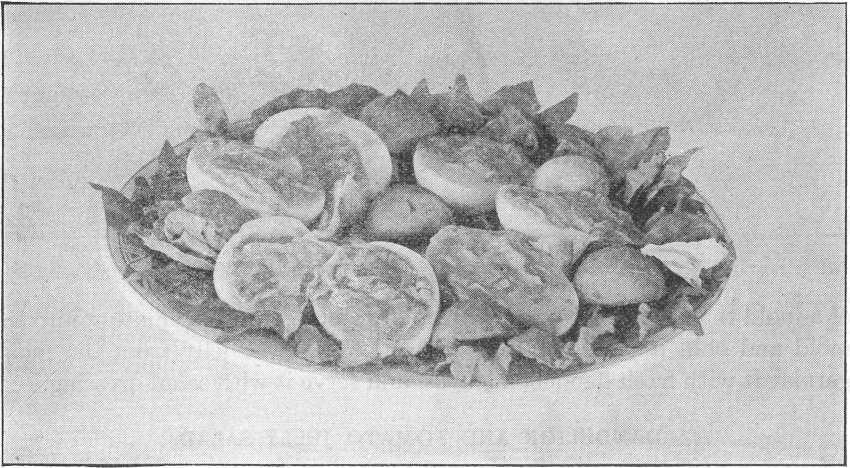


FIG. 18. EGG AND DANDELION SALAD

**DANDELION AND APPLE SALAD**

Cut tender young leaves of the dandelion in small pieces. Add an equal quantity of tart apple cut in cubes, and one teaspoonful of celery salt. Mix the salad well with either boiled or oil dressing, and serve it on dandelion leaves.

**DANDELION JELLY SALAD**

- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 2 tablespoonfuls gelatin              | 5 tablespoonfuls vinegar                  |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ cupful cold water       | 1 teaspoonful salt                        |
| 2 cupfuls hot water                   | $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoonful paprika         |
| 4 tablespoonfuls sugar                | 1 small onion, sliced thin                |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoonful celery salt | 1 canned sweet red pepper, minced         |
| 1 teaspoonful onion juice             | 1 cupful inner tender leaves of dandelion |
| 1 hard-cooked egg                     |   |

Soak the gelatin until soft in the cold water. Dissolve it in the hot water. Add all the other ingredients except the egg, and mix them together well. Cut the white of the egg in rings, and arrange them around the edge

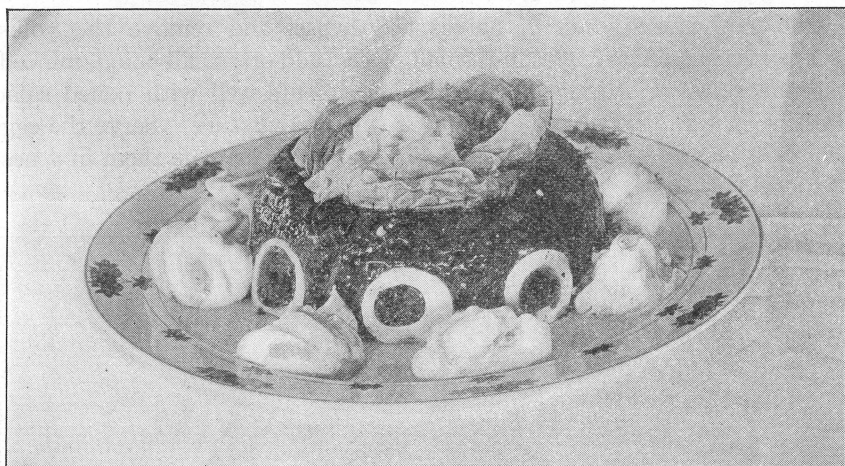


FIG. 19. DANDELION JELLY SALAD

of a mold that has been rinsed with cold water. Pour the mixture into the mold and chill it until the jelly is firm. Turn the jelly from the mold, garnish it with fresh dandelion leaves, and serve it with salad dressing.

**DANDELION AND TOMATO JELLY SALAD**

- |                                       |                                   |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 tablespoonful gelatin               | 1 teaspoonful sugar               |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ cupful cold water       | Salt and pepper                   |
| 2 cupfuls hot strained tomatoes       | 1 cupful dandelion leaves, minced |
| 1 teaspoonful onion juice             | very fine                         |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoonful celery salt |                                   |

Soak the gelatin until soft in the cold water. Dissolve it in the hot tomato juice, and add the other ingredients. Stir the mixture well, and pour it into small molds, which have been rinsed in cold water.

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1 quart tender, inner dandelion leaves | 2 tablespoonfuls vinegar          |
|  | $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoonful paprika |
| 4 tablespoonfuls salad oil             | $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoonful salt    |

Chill the dandelion leaves. When they are crisp, shred them slightly, and marinate them for half an hour by covering them with the dressing made by thoroughly mixing the remaining ingredients. Then arrange the leaves on a plate, and turn the tomato jelly on to the bed of leaves. Place about one tablespoonful of boiled salad dressing on the top of each mold of jelly. Serve the dressed dandelion with the jelly.

#### BOILED SALAD DRESSING

- |                                  |                                   |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Yolks of 3 eggs, beaten slightly | $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoonful paprika |
| $\frac{1}{3}$ cupful sugar       | $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoonful salt    |
| 1 teaspoonful mustard            | 1 cupful vinegar                  |

Combine the ingredients in the order given. Cook the mixture in a double boiler, stirring it constantly, until it is smooth and thick. Use the dressing with equal parts of whipped cream.

#### OIL DRESSING

- |                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1 teaspoonful mustard             | 2 tablespoonfuls lemon juice or vinegar |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoonful salt    |   |
| 1 teaspoonful powdered sugar      | Yolk of 1 egg                           |
| $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoonful paprika | 1 cupful salad oil                      |

Mix the dry ingredients, add the acid, and stir the mixture well. Beat the egg yolk, and add the oil slowly, stirring the mixture constantly. As the mixture thickens, thin it with the vinegar or lemon juice. Continue to add the oil and the acid, alternately. The dressing should be smooth and stiff enough to hold its shape. It should be added to a salad just before serving.

## CORNELL READING COURSE FOR THE FARM HOME

The lessons available in the Cornell Reading Course for the Farm Home are as follows and are free to residents of New York State:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 11 The laundry   | 57 A syllabus of lessons for extension schools in home economics                |
| 13 Cornell study clubs   |   |
| 15 Principles of jelly-making                                  | 59 Sewage disposal for country homes  |
| 17 The preservation of food in the home.— Part I               | 61 Attic dust and treasures   |
| 19 The preservation of food in the home.— Part II              | 63 The young woman on the farm  |
| 21 The preservation of food in the home.— Part III             | 65 Farmhouse amusements for girls and boys                                      |
| 23 Rules for cleaning  | 67 Canning clubs in New York State.— Part I. Organization                       |
| 25 Saving strength   | 69 Canning clubs in New York State.— Part II. Principles and methods of canning |
| 27 Choice and care of utensils                                 | 71 Canning clubs in New York State.— Part III. Canning equipment                |
| 29 Cost of food  | 73 Making cake.— Part I   |
| 31 Household bacteriology                                      | 77 Songs that live  |
| 33 Vegetable-gardening   | 79 Programs for use in study clubs  |
| 35 The flower garden   | 81 Potatoes in the dietary  |
| 37 Home economics at the New York State College of Agriculture | 83 Raising vegetables for canning   |
| 39 The farmhouse   | 85 The arrangement of household furnishings                                     |
| 41 Rules for planning the family dietary                       | 87 The decorative use of flowers  |
| 43 The box luncheon  | 89 Beans and similar vegetables as food   |
| 45 Hints on choosing textiles                                  | 91 The life of primitive woman  |
| 47 A canning business for the farm home                        | 93 Farm home demonstration schools  |
| 49 Household insects and methods of control                    | 95 The fireless cooker and its uses   |
| 51 A story of certain table furnishings                        |   |
| 53 The Christmas festival                                      |   |
| 55 Rice and rice cookery                                       |   |



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|--|---|
| 99 Programs for study clubs in<br>home economics | 103 Suggestions for the health of<br>children |
| 101 Waste of meat in the home.<br>—Part I        | 105 Dandelions as food.                       |

The preceding list is correct to February 1, 1916. The demand may at any time exhaust the supply of particular numbers. Requests will be filled as long as the supply lasts.

